

All -

The Flight Projects Directorate Business Change Initiative is well underway as we are evaluating management, communication and information sharing mechanisms in an effort to improve cost, scheduling and overall performance across the Flight Projects. Thus, I want to share a brief update on the progress we are making and the overall structure and goals of the action teams that are integral to this initiative.

Our initial focus continues to be on inventorying best practices in five key areas: scheduling, business training, earned value management, cost estimating and management and reporting currently implemented within the Directorate. Through this discovery, the ideal processes and products used to manage your projects will be shared throughout the Directorate and Center for every Project's benefit.

Action Team Planning - This gathering of products and processes will be done by designated Action Teams, a collaborative effort among all of you to identify issues, solutions and ALL outstanding practices that will be captured, evaluated and shared. Action Teams will be comprised of civil servants and contractors from various GSFC directorates. The Action Team life cycles are approximately 3-4 months. Each team will identify leading practices, recommend overall changes to be implemented and communicate regularly with leadership and staff. Importantly, they will also study the impact of recommended changes from bottom-up, top-down and external environmental perspectives, and manage specific improvement areas.

Action Teams will be used as a conduit to standardize processes, methods and tools, promote knowledge sharing, leverage best practices and implement new ones to increase effectiveness and enhance chances of project successes at GSFC. To do so, they will interview key projects, review artifacts, identify foremost practices, identify weaknesses, develop a plan and schedule, review progress and roll-out the overall changes that will be implemented among the projects and programs.

To identify Action Team leads and participants, we have reached across the leadership ranks, identifying key individuals that can help push this initiative forward. Several of you may have been contacted already.

Schedule Action Team (SAT) – Progress to date – The first Action Team underway focuses on scheduling. We've convened a cross-functional team comprised of project, business, and SME resources. The SAT first interviewed Code 400 project teams to identify outstanding scheduling practices that could be used across the directorate. These "smart" practices were captured, assessed and validated against GAO's scheduling practices, the National Defense Industrial Association's generally accepted scheduling principles, and NASA's Schedule Management Handbook. Currently the SAT is analyzing data and determining overall unparalleled practices for scheduling to adopt, share and ultimately implement across Code 400 projects. The transfer of these activities will be integrated via workshops, SharePoint wikis, policy documents, structured knowledge maps, technology focus groups and through Communities of Practice.

We will kick off several more action teams in the coming weeks. Our intent is to build upon the successes and operating structure of the SAT to operate other actions in parallel.

We need cooperation from all projects as we attempt to involve as many of you as practical to participate in interviews; provide access to reports, schedules, project tools and processes; and suggest ways that we can leverage the best practices that are happening within 400. Most of all, we need candor, your ideas and your participation.

No one can manage a project better than those working the project. The Flight Projects Directorate is committed to give projects the necessary tools to manage successfully, so please make your voice be heard.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at x65894.

Regards,

Steve

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